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LYRICS OF NEW ENGLAND  
AND OTHER POEMS

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JOHN H. FLAGG



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LYRICS OF NEW ENGLAND  
AND OTHER POEMS



# LYRICS OF NEW ENGLAND

AND

## OTHER POEMS

BY  
JOHN H. FLAGG



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1909

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11

*To Edward Quintard, by whose skilful  
service as a physician and unfailing devo-  
tion as a friend I have been made a double  
debtor, these pages are inscribed in lasting  
gratitude*

*J. H. F.*





## PREFACE

This volume is the outgrowth of a smaller one, privately printed, in 1902, under title of the "*Monarch*," and intended solely for presentation as a Christmas salutation to personal friends of the author. Requests for copies having long since exhausted that limited edition, he has been urged to publish a new volume, to embrace not only the numbers contained in the former one, but others that have since been written. Hence the present volume.

The author hopes that whosoever may honor him by its perusal will deal charitably with its admitted shortcomings, in view of the untoward conditions under which the work was undertaken — conditions well understood by those for whom the book was primarily intended. The continued request for copies of the earlier edition is accepted as an assurance that hitherto this has been graciously accorded, and it is now asked that only like indulgence may be extended to this later work of

THE AUTHOR

114 West Fifty-eighth Street,  
New York, October, 1909



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## POEMS



## CHILDHOOD'S HOME

---

I drempt of busy childhood days, where sun-  
shine ever clung,  
Back in my country home again, when this old  
heart was young —  
Through one brief hour of ecstasy, when every  
thought was bliss,  
With every care forsaken, what spell could be  
like this!

My ravished eyes sought every place — each  
object they once knew —  
With nothing changed in all these years and  
nothing added new —  
Transfixed I stood amid the scenes so long ob-  
scured from sight,

As through the windows shone, methought, a  
consecrated light.

I saw my mother's flower-pots upon the win-  
dow-sill,

Wherein grew sweet geraniums that drooped  
with thirst until

At sunset she would sprinkle them, and fondle  
each with care —

Methought, to gladden my return, their frag-  
rance was still there.

I saw the old melodeon that many an eve I'd  
heard

In hymns led by my mother's voice that hal-  
lowed every word.

This, long since, joined the choir unseen, in an-  
thems sung on high:

I sometimes think I hear it now, through cloud-  
rifts in the sky.



In yonder nook — its custom'd place — stood  
    father's old oak chair,  
Descended from ancestral lines — a gift from  
    heir to heir:  
As if to stay each stranger hand, and shield it  
    from all harm,  
A spider here had spun its web, outstretched  
    from arm to arm.

How often here I'd clambered to my father's  
    waiting knee,  
To hear his thrilling stories of brave deeds on  
    land and sea —  
Of Indian scalpers on the plains, of pirates  
    fierce and bold,  
Of hunters' daring for wild beasts — and those  
    who delve for gold.

Here was the book-case just as when, at restful  
    evening time,

I searched the well-worn volumes through for  
picture or for rhyme,  
Since for plain books I did not care — they  
baffled me with lore —  
And every one I tried to read I found to be a  
bore.

There hung the quaint old mirror still, just  
where it hung before,  
When I had gazed on my first suit, bought at  
the village store;  
And donning once my brother's clothes to it  
I straightway ran,  
To see how big and brave I'd look when I be-  
came a man.

There stood the same old kitchen stove, where  
many a nipping day,  
I'd held my freezing, outstretched hands when  
I came in from play.

This good old friend had one grave fault — it  
burned out wood so fast —  
I hourly lugged an armful in until the cold  
months passed.

Here hour by hour would mother give her  
patient, willing toil,  
To make the good things for us all that care-  
less cooks might spoil;  
Who made for me plump turnovers, and cookies  
by the score,  
And yet I claimed I grew so fast, I needed just  
one more.

There peered the old remorseless clock that  
watched me, argus-eyed,  
And when my bed-time hour arrived my pati-  
ence oft had tried.  
'Twas then I knew it ran too fast, while mother  
claimed 'twas slow; —

Whatever my contention was, I always had to  
go —

Go to my far-off, attic bed, when mother led the  
way,

Whose candle and assuring words my fears did  
not allay.

She bore away the candle, after kissing me  
good-night,

But all through life I've felt that kiss, and seen  
that vanished light.

There hung the same old ample shelf that we  
called "father's own,"

Where he kept Bible, pipe and pen, yet all "odd  
things" were thrown,

Plus "The Old Farmer's Almanac," where we  
were blandly told,

To "Look — about — this — time — for —  
squalls" — which *prophecy* controlled.

When lo, I heard the rattling hail upon the win-  
dow-pane,  
Forewarning that dread winter days were steal-  
ing back again:  
Thanksgiving was approaching, too — that boon  
from old Cape Cod —  
Ordained by pious Pilgrim sires, in gratefulness  
to God.

And whistling then for dear “old Jack,” he  
bounded to my side —  
That noble, true, confiding friend — my com-  
rade and my pride;  
Where'er I strayed, he, too, must go — I al-  
ways felt his touch —  
'Twas hard to call him but a brute, he knew  
and felt so much.

Together then we wandered down through our  
old sugar-place,

Towards the brook and old mill-hole, where oft  
I'd bobbed for dace,  
And once had "hooked" a wise old trout, and  
quivered with delight,  
Until my line caught on a snag, quite hidden  
from my sight.

Throughout that summer, day by day — at  
dawn, at noon, at eve —  
I vainly angled for that trout more hours than  
you'd believe;  
But while he thus outwitted me, I learned be-  
yond a doubt,  
That if on earth there was a sage, it was that  
wise old trout.

I woke to find these vanished scenes of child-  
hood's cherished hours  
A dream of what they once had been, and only  
perished flowers;

Yet grateful am I e'en to be thus led through  
memory's path,  
To pluck with joy such perfumed leaves from  
Dreamland's aftermath.

## THE BROOK

---

I am the brook, the nimble brook,  
Born in my lone, sequestered nook,  
Mid God's untrodden mountain-peaks  
Where Nature every language speaks.

Unlike the footed beasts of earth —  
So frail and helpless at their birth —  
At first I creep, then straightway run,  
Ere my first day has scarce begun.

On then I rush with quickened pace  
And force my way from place to place,  
While other brooklets to me flow  
To swell my volume as I go.



The alders nod when I pass by;  
The reeds and rushes courtesy;  
And where the lilies rise and float  
I suck rare nectar from each throat.

And when I'm wearied and depressed,  
I loiter at my pools to rest,  
But soon press on with doubled haste,  
To catch the hours allowed to waste.

When lo, I'm halted on my way,  
And shackled lest I break away;  
Then like a convict made to toil —  
Man deeming that his rightful spoil.

Thus forced, I tread his endless wheel;  
I grind his grist, and mould his steel;  
His looms I work with tireless hand,  
And all his varied arts expand.

If once I break from servitude,  
I still am sought, am still pursued;  
Where'er I turn, or whither flee,  
Man first is there to harness me.

At last, howe'er, I rend the chain  
That bound me for his sordid gain,  
But not until I've grown ten fold  
Since down the mountain-side I bowled.

And soon I wake, as from a dream,  
To find myself a tidal stream,  
With brackish taste upon my tongue —  
Unknown to me when I was young.

And whence this plight; how can it be  
That I, impelled towards the sea,  
Am forced to turn about each day  
And backward trace my former way?

Bewildered by this constant change  
(To me so meaningless and strange)  
I scarce can tell, howe'er I try,  
Just what I am each day, or why.

But hark! I hear the ocean roar  
And wonder at my fate in store;  
O'erwhelmed I'd be with doubt and fear  
Had I not faith that God is near.

My destiny, thus far benign,  
Was fashioned by a Hand divine;  
On that I always have relied,  
And with it every ill defied.

So now, when doomed henceforth to be  
A plaything of the fretful sea,  
That Hand, found ever at my side,  
Will not forsake me, but abide.

## ODE TO VERMONT

---

Thy very name doth symbolize  
Thy verdant peaks that proudly rise  
As if to buttress with their might  
The unpropped dome of heavenly light.

Thy Druid forests still conceal  
The eagles that high o'er them wheel,  
And shelter well the panting deer  
When driven from the open near.

The beauty of thy matchless hills  
The ravished eye with rapture fills,  
While meadows nestle in between  
As if too modest to be seen.

Thy fruitful fields and fertile plains  
Bear flocks and herds and bounteous grains;  
Where'er the gladdened eye may rest  
The husbandman seems doubly blessed.

Thy hillside homes and hamlets all  
Proclaim content and thrift withal —  
Won by the hardened hand of toil  
From thy well-tilled, though rugged soil.

No trembling slave yet breathed thy air  
And felt his shackles bind him there,  
For by thy ancient Bill of Rights\*  
All men stand equal on thy heights.

Sons of thy birth, such land is thine;  
Where first thy sires reared freedom's shrine;

---

\* Vermont, in July, 1777 — fourteen years anterior to admission into the Union — was first of all the states and territories to prohibit slavery by constitutional provision.

Who vanquished each invading foe,  
And swept him back, or laid him low.

Thus to the fittest can we trace  
Thy present sturdy, virile race,  
And may it ever there remain  
To rule as now o'er thy domain.

And for that land, by Heaven caressed,  
Where all are free, and none oppressed,  
Thank well those sires whose master hand  
Built from thy rock, and not thy sand,

And guard with more than pious care  
Thy heritage, as trusted heir,  
So that forever here shall be  
The mountain home of liberty!

## A NEW ENGLAND TWILIGHT

---

'Tis Nature's chosen hour for rest,  
When all is calm within her breast;  
When Day still leaves a friendly light  
To guide the footsteps of the Night;

When, one by one, a silent star  
Peers through some portal left ajar,  
While languid beams the pallid moon  
As if reviving from a swoon.

The cows, long since, in lagging train  
Came browsing down the pasture lane,  
To yield their tribute unaware,  
In turn for scanty keep and care.

The housewife spreads the frugal meal;  
The pigs for theirs are heard to squeal,  
While from her stall the old gray mare  
Neighs loudly for her well-earned share.

The bat, which all the day hath hung,  
Unhooks himself from where he clung,  
And with the swallows debonair  
Flits here and there and everywhere.

The whippoorwill now comes to fill  
Our souls with deeper rapture still,  
Whose song, suppressed throughout the day,  
But sweeter makes his evening lay.

The turkeys take to roost like troops  
In dressed-up lines — not huddled groups —  
While night-hawks far above them fly —  
The sole explorers of the sky.



The orchestra of croaking frogs  
Strikes up among the lowland bogs,  
Whereat the fire-flies now advance  
And take their partners for the dance.

At length, as darkness deeper grows,  
All creatures nestle to repose  
Save night's weird sentinel, the owl,  
Robed in his monkish cope and cowl,

For Nature's curfew has been rung,  
And songbirds have their vespers sung;  
No sound the freshening breeze now brings,  
Save hurrying midnight's rustling wings.

## THE TESTY DEACON

---

'Twas down in the old Pine Tree state  
Where chanced to pass what I relate;  
Where pie at every meal is found,  
And Yankees at their best abound;

Where, too, they serve their pork and beans  
In methods fit for kings and queens,  
But where French gastronomic art  
Is not in vogue in any part.

'Twas in a rural farming town  
That never yet had won renown,  
Where dwelt a farmer — Ephraim Hale —  
The “hero” of this touching tale.

Now "Deacon Eph," as he was called,  
Wore well his years, though long since bald,  
And led a fairly righteous life,  
Though always testy with his wife.

But she — the counterpart of him —  
Indulged his every peevish whim;  
So meek and humble had she grown,  
That lasting feuds were seldom known.

He therefore found domestic life  
A blessed boon with such a wife;  
But had she been a grumpy dame  
That life might not have been so tame.

Long deacon in the village church,  
His name thus far had known no smirch;  
This being so, folks thought that he  
Was what good deacons all should be.

With Yankee thrift he money made  
By raising geese which often strayed  
E'en to his neighbor's very door,  
And wrecked his garden o'er and o'er.

One day this neighbor — Moses Slade —  
Espied them, while in ambush laid,  
Each delving like a lusty Turk  
To ruin all his spring-time work.

Enraged, he seized each poaching goose,  
And ere he turned one of them loose,  
Slit through the web between its toes,  
And made *one* foot just like a *crow's*.

In panic then they hustled all  
To get beyond the garden wall,  
And chose the shortest route for home,  
With no desire to further roam.

They sought at once — by instinct led —  
The near-by pond, where they were bred,  
And then proceeded, one by one,  
To navigate as often done.

But lo! all calculations failed,  
And their aquatic ardor quailed  
When round and round their bodies spun,  
With not an inch of headway won.

Now one more fault the Deacon had,  
Which was a temper, always bad;  
And this he lashed with passion's whip,  
And made it sting at every clip.

So when he saw his injured geese,  
His rage foretold a breach of peace;  
He swore that for this dastard trick  
He'd have revenge, and have it quick.

Now he had known for many a day  
Just where his geese were wont to stray,  
For sore complaint had oft been made  
Of their foul work, by neighbor Slade.

So, well disguised, the first dark night,  
He sought that neighbor's barn for spite,  
And from the tail of his old mare  
He shaved off every blessed hair.

Now Slade, when piqued, raged like a bear,  
(Some thought because he had red hair)  
And would the least affront resent  
And visit with dire punishment.

And he avowed that he alone  
Knew by whose hand the deed was done,  
For he'd pursued the freshest trail,  
And *that* led straight to Deacon Hale.

“My turn,” he said, “has come at last,  
To even up for all the past,  
And now I’ll tan his tough old hide,  
And drive him from the church beside.”

He therefore sought a magistrate  
To whom he did his object state,  
Which, (keeping mum about his geese)  
*Appeared* to be the “public peace.”

He then on oath charged Ephraim Hale  
With crime, in that he did assail  
And mutilate his old bay mare  
By cutting off her caudal hair.

He further swore that the offense  
Arose from malice, called “prepnese,”  
And that the act did violate  
The peace and dignity of the State.

He therefore prayed the Court to grant  
A warrant for the miscreant,  
Which, with a grave, judicial air,  
Was signed and issued then and there.

'Twas with much craft that neighbor Slade  
On *Saturday*, this charge had made,  
So that arrest, if on that night,  
Would make still worse the Deacon's plight.

Just at the hour of evening prayers  
Went forth the Sheriff unawares  
To make arrest of Deacon Hale  
And take him to the county jail.

The Deacon answered his loud knock  
As struck the hour of eight o'clock,  
And warmly bade him enter in,  
As if he were his fondest kin.



His mission being soon explained,  
The sheriff, as if deeply pained,  
The warrant read, in doleful tones,  
Oft punctured by the Deacon's groans.

Then Ephraim, who was much enraged,  
Tore like a tiger first encaged,  
And charged upon "that viper, Slade,"  
The outrage of this dastard raid.

Though "Mother Hale" for mercy pled,  
And grievous tears abundant shed —  
All proved to be of no avail  
To save her raving spouse from jail.

Full half that wretched night was o'er,  
When swung the Jailor's ponderous door,  
Through which the Sheriff quickly passed  
Together with his charge, held fast.

The Deacon still with anger burned,  
Yet meekly to the Jailor turned  
As if his mild, though searching eye,  
Betokened welcome sympathy.

“How can,” he shrieked, “one in my plight  
Get from this den this very night?”  
“Until you’re tried, you must get bail,”  
The Jailor said, “or stay in jail.”

“That,” he rejoined, “I’ll do straightway,  
And leave this hole ere break of day,  
Then with my wife to church I’ll go,  
And no one of this scrape shall know.”

“You can’t do that,” the Jailor said,  
“For *Justice* lies asleep in bed;  
Besides, the Sabbath’s now well on,  
And that, in law, is *dies non*.”

The Deacon closing not his eyes  
Throughout that night tried to devise  
The means whereby he might get bail  
And quit, for good, that curséd jail.

That Sabbath day he gave to prayer,  
And thoughts of sacred things elsewhere;  
His waiting home, his weeping wife,  
And church he'd missed not once through life.

When bail, at length, had been obtained,  
And Ephraim had his freedom gained,  
His homeward journey he began —  
A sadder, though much wiser man.

But from the first, in church and out,  
Were those who never had a doubt  
That somewhere there was evidence  
To fix on him that grave offense.

Therefore a meeting of the church  
Was called to instigate a search,  
And members chosen by "the chair"  
Were sent to view the hapless mare.

They found, indeed, an ancient brute  
Bereft of caudal growth hirsute,  
But not one fact to prove withal,  
*Who* plied the art tonsorial.

And so, their mission having failed,  
(A fact which some no doubt bewailed)  
There seemed to be no earthly clue  
Which they with hope could then pursue.

But while no headway had been won  
To show by whom the deed was done,  
A *Tramp* came sliding down the mow,  
Who told by whom, and when, and how.

He stated that, "On one dark night  
While in the barn, appeared a light,"  
And that he "watched and saw old Hale  
With sheep-shears slash that hoss's tail."

"He knew," he said, "the old cuss well,"  
And divers instances did tell,  
When from his watch-dogged house he'd fled,  
While foraging for needful bread.

From what they thus had seen and heard,  
Their souls were shocked and deeply stirred,  
And all agreed, with prompt accord,  
To put the culprit to the sword,

For now the church was up in arms,  
(And for just once, omitted psalms);  
Their Deacon was in deep disgrace  
And in the church, was out of place.

From office he was then deposed;  
His name was dropped, his pew was closed,  
And neighbor Slade, more strange than all,  
Was chosen deacon through his fall.

That tranquil town had never known  
Such tumult as was now upthrown,  
And long it was, in church and out,  
Before its peace was brought about.

But peace unto these life-long foes  
Has also come to end *their* woes;  
Not peace begot of passions cooled  
In hearts where once a vengeance ruled,

But from their being laid to rest  
In the old churchyard's well-scarred breast:  
'Tis just because they're *dead*, you see,  
That now they dwell in unity!

## THE AWAKENING

---

At length the mystic touch of Spring  
Awakes the slumbering forms of earth,  
When Nature, 'neath her warming wing,  
Imparts her semblance of rebirth.

Each bud now yearns to be a flower  
While yet its form is scarce revealed,  
And visited by sun and shower  
Is fondled by a Hand concealed.

'Tis now that sympathizing Spring  
Restores what Autumn bore away,  
And in her lavish hand doth bring  
The blossoms of exultant May,

Whose breath infuses every breeze  
    With odors and perfumes divine,  
Drawn from the blossomed apple-trees  
    And every fragrant bud and vine.

The wild-geese drag, on tireless wing,  
    Their steedless harrow through the sky,  
And thus make known that jocund Spring —  
    Her apron filled with flowers — draws nigh.

The robins vie with sweetest song  
    The bobolinks and orioles —  
Sweetest because suppressed so long  
    Their carols burst from brimming souls.

We hear the chirp of building birds,  
    And cawing of the high-perched crows,  
While from the far-off browsing herds,  
    The cow-bells' drowsy tinkle flows.



The blackbirds from the meadows cry;  
The plover pipes from yonder bogs,  
And from the stagnant pool hard by  
Rise languorous murmurings of the frogs.

And all these mingled sounds create  
A soul-enchanting harmony,  
As one by one they undulate  
Through Nature's throbbing symphony.

The odors breathed, the sights we see,  
The sounds we hear, by day, by night,  
Hold us enthralled in reverie,  
And in a spell of glad delight.

JUSTIN S. MORRILL

---

(A SENATOR OF THE UNITED STATES FROM 1867  
TO 1899).

READ AT A GATHERING OF HIS FRIENDS AT HIS  
RESIDENCE IN WASHINGTON  
ON HIS EIGHTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY,  
APRIL 14TH, 1893

Like some o'ertowering forest oak that still  
Withstands the blasts of four-score years and  
more,  
While growths of younger years uprooted fall;  
Hoary with ripened leaf, yet valiant, strong;  
Those rapturous days are once again thine own.  
When virgin buds, kissed by the vernal sun,  
From joyful lips speak gratitude.  
We hail thee now, with fonder, firmer grasp,

Thankful to Him who rules all destinies,  
That, well-nigh shivered by the furious blast\*  
That bent thee low, and made fond hearts de-  
spair,

Thou'rt left but stronger by the gale, and still  
Canst with thy friends rejoice, this natal day,  
To stand on earth, though gazing into heaven!

Thy rest has come. And with thy worth and  
fame

So justly earned, nought can enhance thee more.  
'Twas when thy country, looted of its hoard —  
When treason sapped its heart-blood and its  
life —

That thou didst touch the well-spring with thy  
wand,

And from it gushed the vital stream that saved.  
And though thy country's deepest, foulest stain  
Must needs be washed away in blood and tears,

---

\* A serious illness.

The fettered have been freed, and hushed the  
din

Of curséd war, whose awful uproar once  
Convulsed the troubled land from sea to sea.  
Saved is the State, and hostile cannon now  
Are moulded into pyramids of peace!  
And lo, the temple thou hast helped to rear  
To justice long by fate denied, now marks  
The uplift of a race enslaved  
Toward the birth-born, blood-gained rights of  
man.

Old friend,  
Thy well-earned rest has come. A grateful  
State  
Whose weal was known, and served so long, so  
well,  
E'en now would lay fresh garlands on thy brow;  
But needing nought to make thy fame endure,  
It prays that thou shalt have forevermore,  
That lasting peace thou hast for others won!

## THE WOODS

---

Fain to the vaulted woods I go, where solitude  
doth reign,

And seat me on some lichened rock — a brief  
surcease to gain —

From turmoil of the market-place, where greed  
with covin vies,

And human souls are bought and sold, as well  
as merchandise.

Here would I breathe the balsamed air, the  
freshness of the trees,

And listen to the song of birds, and hum of  
gathering bees;

Ah, here is peace, supernal peace, a paradise  
regained,

Where every care of life is lost, and blissful rest  
attained.

Here spread the hemlock's feathery wings; here  
lift the stately pines;  
And here the birches whiter seem, by ruddy,  
clinging vines;  
Here, too, the fruitful chestnuts tower, and in  
the lengthening year,  
With bursting burrs and shining nuts the  
scampering squirrels cheer.

On yonder spruce, now spectral grown, and aged  
with countless ills,  
The lone woodpecker urgent raps — then listens  
where he drills —  
To hear the toiling insect stir, where strips of  
bark yet cling,  
Then raps again till one is found, then flies on  
fleeter wing.

I hear the cawing crows above, that fly against  
the breeze,  
And then the locust's ceaseless chirr that comes  
from distant trees;  
The nimble chipmunk's call I hear, that brings  
her wandering young,  
To share with her some early nut, now dropt  
from where it clung.

Where yonder tasseled alders grow, with pussy-  
willows near,  
A gurgling rill meanders by to lull the wearied  
ear,  
Whose murmuring voice is half suppressed by  
low, o'erhanging banks,  
Which marvel at its tortuous course, and other  
playful pranks.

The trillium and anemone, throughout each  
summer day,

Waft their sweet kisses back and forth across  
the rippling way;  
And thinking they are quite unseen, they give  
the world no thought,  
But mirrored in that tell-tale brook are all  
their amours caught.

But hark! I hear the partridge drum, to call his  
absent mate;  
And then the silver-throated thrush his ecstasies  
relate.  
The veeries and the vireos make all the woods  
rejoice,  
And rapture comes when whippoorwills add  
their exultant voice.

Thus Nature's untrained orchestra doth cheer  
the pensive soul,  
And countless other joys are found to comfort  
and console;



And while a grateful memory clings to trans-  
ports that have passed,  
If some, perchance, shall be forgot, these sure  
shall be the last.

## THE RETURN

---

From native village, years away,  
I once more trod its lonely street  
The morning of a summer's day,  
Nor saw one face to know and greet.

And here, anon, I paused to view  
Some once-familiar spot, but lo,  
No trace remained of what I knew,  
For all had vanished long ago.

I crossed the bridge where once the stream  
Ran deep and dark and hurriedly,  
But now I saw — how like a dream —  
Its waters ripple languidly.

I sought, near by, the school-house where  
In torment of captivity,  
The droning, dawdling days spent there  
Were to me like eternity.

Though here I'd bent to many a task  
Throughout my boyhood, year by year,  
Desertion stared, and seemed to ask:  
“What *stranger* is now sauntering here?”

Hard by, the “meeting-house” still stood  
Where on each Sabbath old and young  
Met as in common brotherhood  
To worship God with reverent tongue.

How memory now brought to my view  
Those childhood friends I here had known —  
All seated in the same old pew  
As if, since then, no years had flown.

Of these, methought, how many score  
Had, in their last majestic state,  
Been borne from out its ample door  
To pass, nay more, yon churchyard gate.

I entered there among the dead,  
And strolled past many a chiselled stone  
At which I paused and slowly read  
The name of some remembered one.

Such caravan of years had passed  
Since I this hallowed ground had trod,  
'Twas now a teeming city massed  
With those whose souls repose with God.

With sadder heart I wandered through  
The neighboring aisles still narrower,  
That I might find, and once more view,  
The sacred spot where kindred were,

When lo, I saw uprising near,  
A shaft from spotless marble hewed —  
Pure as an angel's frozen tear —  
Fit emblem of their lives renewed.

Though sadder made by lingering here,  
Regretfully I onward passed,  
The more, because I could but fear  
That this brief view might be my last.

Yet be it so, 'tis joy to know  
That here such benedictions rest —  
Where flowers of sweeter fragrance grow,  
In tribute to the loved and blest —

Where blithesome birds that gladden spring,  
Renounce their earlier-chosen ways,  
And hither fly, on fleeter wing,  
To sing their sweetest roundelays;

And where, forsaking other bowers,  
The humming-birds and honey bees  
Bring sweets first drawn from other flowers  
To dwell more blissful here with these,

Where mingled with the birds of song  
They find delight unknown before,  
And my entreaty would prolong  
Their visitation evermore.

## THE PATRIARCH OAK

---

Surmounting lofty crags and cliffs,  
And bent by Time's remorseless blast,  
An ancient oak its form uplifts,  
Defiant now as through the past.

And here, on Horicon's wild shore,  
It gazes back on centuries,  
And through a life of twenty score  
Of years replete with memories.

Hard by, a younger oak doth stand —  
Fit offspring of this noble sire —  
Prepared to stretch its helpful hand  
Should failing strength its aid require.

And tongued with Nature's mystic words,  
They closer lean as they commune,  
While in their shade the grateful herds  
Repose through afternoons of June.

One day, the scion speaking, said :  
"Thou, sire, dost seem the oldest here;  
Bent is thy form and gray thy head,  
And death, e'en now, may loiter near,

"For in the last relentless storm,  
Oft didst thou groan as if in pain;  
Enraged it shook thy quivering form,  
And well-nigh laid thee with the slain.

"While yet thy thews are tough and strong,  
With mind composed and memory clear,  
Relate at length, in prose or song,  
The early scenes enacted here,



“When in that primal solitude  
Which knew no voice, nor scarce a sound  
Throughout its vast infinitude  
All Nature seemed but more profound.”

“On such a theme I fain would dwell,”  
Replied the Patriarch of old,  
“And ere I’m called to bid farewell,  
My willing story shall be told.”

And it spoke not a language rude  
Like that of wild-men it had heard,  
But one the Dryads understood,  
Which bore no sound, yet never erred.

So, on that reminiscent day,  
The Patriarch its silence broke,  
And in a grave, impressive way  
Discoursed at length, and thus it spoke:

“Long ere the white man found his way  
To these forbidding solitudes,  
The baneful savage here held sway —  
Involved in ceaseless tribal feuds.

“And here he fought his mortal foes  
So long as yet survived a brave,  
And every root beneath me knows  
And wanders to some sachem’s grave.

“So if till now I have been spared,  
(Though centuries I can retrace)  
It is because my sinews shared  
The vigor of that virile race.

“Then, silence here was so profound  
That even Nature seemed oppressed,  
And as if grateful for the sound  
That roused her from that languid rest,

“As when some towering forest tree  
Long rent by tempests, year by year,  
Fell prostrate mid the earth’s debris,  
And crashing, startled every ear;

“Or when some furious wind-storm swept  
The slumbering lake with loud uproar,  
The waves, like frenzied chargers leapt,  
And broke in fragments on its shore;

“Or when some famished wild-beast caught  
The trail to which a scent still clung,  
With prey at bay, it snarled and fought  
To rob some mother of her young,

“For where in safety children share  
Their joyful pastimes of to-day,  
Then roamed the panther, wolf and bear,  
Relentless in their search of prey.

“But fiercer than the famished beast —  
Whose lust for blood no hand could stay —  
Were those red demons, when, unleashed,  
They sprang from ambush for the fray.

“And through those years of endless strife,  
Scant was the spot on this fair shore  
Which tomahawk and scalping-knife  
Had not oft stained with human gore.

“But long at rest, those warring braves —  
The Algonquins and Iroquois —  
Have slumbered in their sunken graves,  
No more their ambush to employ.

“The first white man to venture here  
Was Father Jogues, by Jesuits sent —  
A missionary pioneer —  
Who called the lake ‘Saint Sacrament.’

“And here that pious man long dwelt  
To teach the Indians Christian faith,  
Not knowing, when in prayer he knelt,  
What hand might deal an instant death.\*

“Long here the French and English fought —  
Their royal standards to uprear —  
But by vain struggle they were taught  
That empires were exotic here.

“On yonder field their legions met  
And clenched like athletes for the fray,  
Where Dieskau gained the first onset,  
But Johnson later won the day.

“And leading where no other dared,  
Intrepid Williams, ambushed, fell,  
Of whose brave men scarce one was spared  
The horrors of the scene to tell —

---

\* He fell a martyr to the faith in 1646, being brutally murdered by the Mohawks, among whom he was then laboring as missionary.

“Where noble Hendrick, too, was led  
To perish in that slaughter-pen,  
Where he was found strewn with the dead  
Which filled, breast-high, that sombre glen.

“I saw the valiant troops of France  
Sail through the lake in proud array,  
When Montcalm made his bold advance,  
And savage allies led the way —

“The way to where they saw afar  
Fort William Henry, bastion-walled,  
At whose unsparing massacre  
Humanity has stood appalled;

“Where thirst for blood was only quenched  
By tomahawking every brain,  
Until the death-strewn soil was drenched  
By dripping piles of mangled slain.

“I later saw the buoyant troops  
Of Abercrombie’s mighty fleet,  
When through the lake his crowded sloops  
Bore on his men to doomed defeat.

“That spectacle no pen forgets,  
Where banners waved with flags uprun  
Mid flashing arms and bayonets,  
Resplendent in that July sun.

“No eye discerned that awful fate  
Which soon, too soon, they were to know,  
When those who now were so elate  
Were to go down before the foe,

“Where thrice, those legions — strong and  
brave —  
’Gainst Montcalm’s serried lines were thrown,  
To meet repulse and find a grave,  
But make that field a Marathon.

“And where thine eyes are resting now,  
Near yonder field of waving grain,  
All England’s pride — the peerless Howe —  
First fell among his gallant slain.

“Ticonderoga — that stronghold —  
Was won and lost, and won again,  
And by its fate alike was told  
The gain or loss of Lake Champlain,

“Where Allen won immortal fame  
By taking with his doughty band  
(And in the Great Jehovah’s name)  
The fortress and its whole command;

“When England first was made to feel,  
In that brief hour of dawning light,  
What blows Green Mountain Boys could deal  
When armored in the cause of right.



“Hard by, were Arnold’s vessels built  
    (If built they were when half complete)  
With which that traitor, ere his guilt,  
    At Valcour fought the British fleet;

“Where, manned by those intrepid sons,  
    E’en with a fleet so crudely wrought,  
He well-nigh silenced Carleton’s guns —  
    Near twice his own — for Spartans fought —

“Fought to the last expiring breath  
    To rend their shackles and be free,  
And welcomed nought so much as death,  
    If vassals they must longer be —

“Nay, fought as only those can fight,  
    Who, writhing ’neath a despot’s heel,  
Rise up at last in awful might,  
    And make to God their last appeal.

“And later still I heard the roar  
Of distant guns that anxious day,  
When England sought, as at Valcour,  
To worst our fleet at Plattsburg Bay,

“But where her vaunted ships instead  
Were crushed as tigers crush their prey,  
Till torn and tattered to a shred,  
They struck their colors in dismay;

“Where scornful England soon was taught  
Her impotency on the wave,  
And that where'er McDonough fought,  
There, too, she'd find a waiting grave.

“War's ugly sound so constant here  
Throughout those tragic days of yore,  
No longer plagues the harassed ear,  
For peace now gladdens every shore,

“And where imperial armies fought  
To gain this virgin continent,  
A providential Hand hath wrought  
A free, benignant government,

“Whose sovereign is the people’s will,  
Expressed by all, denied to none;  
And here the conflict raged until  
That righteous cause at last was won.

“And here was planted and enshrined  
The sacred tree of Liberty,  
Whose outstretched branches, intertwined,  
Are sought by all humanity.

“So here, upon this hallowed ground,  
The weak, the downtrod, and oppressed,  
From tyranny at last have found  
A refuge and abiding rest.

“But death’s approach I feel is near  
    (For now my strength is waning fast)  
And when I go will disappear  
    Those sires of whom I am the last.

“Thou shalt live on, and living see  
    The baneful savage nevermore;  
Where curled the smoke from his tepee,  
    From workshop now it doth outpour;

“And where his dreaded war-whoop broke  
    The spell of Nature’s reverie,  
There now is heard the anvil-stroke,  
    And ceaseless whirr of industry.

“Nought, nought remains where once he trod,  
    To tell that he abided here,  
Save the rude flint, turned with the sod,  
    And soon this, too, shall disappear.

“Farewell! May Heaven thy years prolong,  
Yet not more curséd war to see  
Save to redress some grievous wrong,  
But lasting peace thy country’s be!”

## SLEEP

---

O Sleep, whose subtle anodynes  
Doth drug the sentries of the soul  
To hold an hostage for repose;  
That with fresh-minted coin doth fill  
Exhausted Nature's empty purse,  
Thou art life's sovereign comforter,  
That respite brings to drudging toil,  
To brooding care, and throbbing grief.  
There is no pain thou canst not soothe;  
No anguish thou canst not assuage.  
Impartial, too, thy boon is given,  
For both to peasant and to king,  
To those in gladness or despair,  
Thou art the equal almoner.  
Inconstant as the rainbow's hue,

And moved by nought save thy caprice,  
No malediction can coerce,  
Nor supplication lure thee on.  
But when thy visitation comes,  
The sceptred soul abjures its throne  
And kneels a vassal at thy feet.  
The boisterous pulse of life is calmed;  
The tumult of the world is hushed;  
Oblivion throws its mantle o'er  
The graven tablets of the brain,  
And fancy's noiseless loom then weaves  
From languor's skein of tangled thread  
The wondrous tapestry of dreams.

## THE MONARCH

---

*Tempus edax rerum*

Behold! — the Monarch, Time, am I,  
Whom none shall balk, nor dare deny.  
The oldest sovereign of the earth  
Found me entrenched here at his birth,  
For long ere mortal crown was worn,  
Or king or potentate was born,  
The mandates from my ancient throne  
Resounded here from zone to zone.  
Thus I'm supreme in every clime  
Though deeds like mine are made a crime  
If done, perchance, by human hand —  
An outlaw made throughout the land.  
And though man execrates my deeds,



And piteously for mercy pleads,  
What care I what his praise may be,  
Or his anathema of me?  
Since neither blandishment nor curse  
Can ever coax me or coerce.

My mission here is to despoil —  
To do it well, my only toil —  
So well, indeed, that nevermore  
Shall that thing live that lived before,  
And envy tells no rival how  
To snatch the laurel from my brow.

And would'st thou know what I've achieved?  
Ask the despairing — the bereaved —  
Recount the races, puissant, vast,  
That roamed the earth in ages past,  
The outlines of whose crumbling tomb  
Are lost in ever-deepening gloom.

That I am partial to no friend  
Or spite a foe, none will contend.  
I *have* no friend, but half my foes  
Would outcount flakes of Arctic snows.  
Because my victims well obey,  
(Oft with scant time to kneel and pray)  
No armies I employ to awe,  
Or force submission to my law,  
Yet Christian lands denounce me when  
*Their* thrones drip with the blood of men.

I delve at noonday and at night,  
(For my vocation needs no light)  
And on with muffled feet I stride  
As noiseless as the lifting tide,  
And wake not those who, if they sleep,  
May cease for one brief hour to weep.  
And since hale youth is ever mine,  
Of weariness I show no sign  
At close of day, nor yet the year,  
In loading death upon my bier,

Nor reaching down into the grave  
To turn to dust what Nature gave.

Behold my work already done  
With yet my purpose scarce begun!  
Where tropic suns now smite the earth,  
Gleamed icebergs once, of ponderous girth;  
Where ocean billows once lept high,  
Now Chimborazo cleaves the sky;  
Where primal Rome was hewn and reared,  
Five Romes in turn have disappeared;  
Where Carthage held imperial sway,  
Wild forest beasts now seek their prey,  
And where loomed Karnak's mighty walls,  
The sluggish reptile creeps and crawls —  
All ages past to me appear  
Like yesterdays, and quite as near.

The lord of skies and seas and lands,  
I spare no work of human hands.  
The sculptured forms by genius wrought,

The monuments where heroes fought,  
The courts where kings look down from thrones,  
The pantheons where lie their bones,  
The fanes upreared by pious hands,  
The pyramids on Egypt's sands —  
Where mouldering Pharoah mummies lie  
Concealed to cheat my searching eye —  
Man's castles and his rustic homes,  
His temples with their gilded domes,  
His campaniles and his towers  
Where tolls the knell of passing hours;  
His treasures, trophies, battle-won,  
His states and empires, one by one,  
Alike shall perish with the rest,  
And turn to dust, at my behest.

Yet mark, withal, what still shall be,  
And nought can frustrate my decree.  
Proud *Ætna's* flames no more shall burn,  
Nor glaciers freeze and melt in turn;

Unfathomed oceans, dark and drear,  
Shall vanish like a transient tear;  
To nebulæ I'll change the earth  
And thus restore its primal dearth;  
I'll pluck the planets from the skies,  
(Which dazzle now man's wondering eyes)  
And then blot out the blazing sun  
And turn to vapor, whence begun;  
Then, midst the ruin I have wrought,  
And desolation — nothing aught —  
Behold me seated on my throne —  
A Monarch still — though left alone!

## ON A DEW DROP

---

What is that chaste, that sparkling thing,  
Which to the rose at dawn doth cling,  
And nestled to its throbbing breast,  
Plays ardent lover while a guest?

'Tis but a tear of weeping night —  
The weeping of a glad delight —  
Till startled by obtruding day,  
Night, fearing capture, steals away.

## ODE TO A BULLFINCH

---

A captive made, as if some baneful beast  
And not the inoffending thing thou art,  
'Tis strange that thou shouldst still have heart  
    for song,  
Or evermore disport, or blithesome be,  
Afar from groves that sheltered thee when  
    young,  
Where still thy kindred in their freedom dwell  
And harken for thy voice — thy fate unknown —  
Disheartened at thy absence, so prolonged.  
Full much my guilty heart doth me reproach  
When I reflect what unprovokéd wrong  
My selfish greed has done thee, gentle one,  
The more because thou knowest well my deed,

Which deeper makes regret that not atones.  
Yet, no resentment plagues thy placid breast,  
Such as, for half thy cause, man would avenge,  
But, unlike him, a guerdon thou dost give  
By gladdening all the day with such rare song  
As would dishearten sirens should they hear,  
Or nightingale mistake for some lost mate.  
But lo, the tranquil twilight hour has come —  
All-hallowed by the vesper thou hast sung —  
And I must bid thee loath farewell till morn.  
Till then, may peace pervade the downy breast  
Which folds that all-forgiving heart of thine —  
Peace undeserved by that one robbed of me!



## A GENTLE MAIDEN DO I KNOW

---

A gentle maiden do I know  
Who so bewilders human eyes,  
That when beheld, it seems as though  
One angel less dwelt in the skies.

In her so much of the divine  
Is shown in her seraphic face,  
'Twere fitting that by Heaven's design  
Her home should be some holy place.

Her smile is like a radiant flower —  
The blossom of her blithesome heart —  
One unconstrained, and borne each hour  
By native grace that knows no art.

Her lips are like two rosebuds grown  
In touch upon a single stem,  
Which, when she smiles, burst forth full-  
blown —  
Sunshine itself seems born of them.

Her voice is softer than that heard  
When doves croon to their helpless young,  
With pathos of some mate-lost bird  
Whose plaint till then had been unsung.

Her eyes are that celestial blue  
That deepens with the summer shower,  
And would by tenderness subdue  
All threat of dark and evil power.

Her blush is like a damask rose  
Concealed in some vine-tangled wall,  
But when exposed, benignly throws  
Its prisoned glory over all.

In her all graces are so blent  
In one embodied loveliness,  
That on her one could gaze content  
Through life — if he could not caress!

## AN AMORETTE

---

The favoring stars shine o'er my head,  
For now the lingering day hath fled,  
Whose loitering hours seemed years to me,  
Because they held me far from thee.

Behold, and with compassion's eyes,  
Thy lover who with longing sighs,  
And hear the message of his heart,  
Which of thine own seems but a part.

That message is its fervent prayer,  
Which long repressed, still smothers there,  
Yet shouldst thou hear it with disdain,  
Love's quenchless fire would still remain.

But helpless as Prometheus bound,  
And like him, bleeding with my wound,  
I bring to thee a heart aglow,  
That my wild passion thou shalt know,

Which thirsts thee as the burning plain  
Thirsts for the long-belated rain,  
With love as pure, and strong, and deep,  
As Gulf Stream currents where they sweep.

Some fairy would I gladly be,  
To serve thy bidding constantly —  
To shield thee from all evil eyes,  
And guard thy self-made paradise;

I'd lure the birds from chosen climes  
To sing for thee their sweetest rhymes,  
For thy rare beauty would inspire  
Their raptured souls with that desire.

Unseen, I'd watch the gathering bee,  
And where he sipped I'd pluck for thee  
The sweetest flowers that bud and bloom,  
To shed round thee their rare perfume.

I'd guard thy slumbers through the night,  
And prompt for thee dreams of delight —  
Dreams of some far-off world of bliss,  
For thou wert made too pure for this.

O harken, I implore thee now  
To that heart-longing I avow,  
Then but one favoring smile bestow,  
And teach me heaven's own joy to know,

Or if, when thou art wrapped in sleep,  
One tender thought of me may creep  
Into thy visions, unsuppressed,  
In rapture, then, this heart shall rest!

## CAPTIVITY

---

Thy tender, thoughtful, earnest eyes —  
Within their tranquil depths there lies  
A magic power, unknown to thee,  
That chains me in captivity.

The morning light the brighter grows  
Wherever their effulgence flows,  
And e'en at night, their potent ray  
Converts the darkness into day —

A day so bright with their own light  
That should each star and satellite,  
Nay, every planet cease to blaze,  
Night's darkest hours would rival day's.

So would ones pathway through the years  
Of life's contending hopes and fears,  
Be made one blissful, hallowed spell,  
Should such supernal light there dwell.



## I THINK OF THEE

---

I think of thee when, dim and gray,  
Belated, drowsy night is roused,  
And loath to go, half-clad and slow,  
Recedes before advancing day.

I think of thee when anxious care  
Enslaves me through the drudging day,  
But toil were sweet, with joy replete,  
Could I for thee my burdens bear.

I think of thee with fonder heart  
When Day, embracing timid Night,  
Prolongs his kiss of rapturous bliss  
Like lovers when enforced to part.

And when, at last, I seek repose,  
On thee my craving dreams still feast,  
Yet when I wake and dreams forsake,  
My yearning but intenser grows.

Thus throbs my heart unceasingly  
From dawn to dark, from dark to dawn,  
In wild desire, a quenchless fire,  
Till smothered by eternity!

## A MEMORY

---

I gazed on such a beauteous face,  
And form of such surpassing grace,  
That had some genius e'er portrayed  
The peerless creature I surveyed,  
Then would the lustre of his name  
Have brighter made the page of fame.

While thus I gazed, intent, beguiled,  
The face, as if unconscious, smiled,  
When o'er a harp flew two white hands  
Like mated swallows o'er the sands.  
Methought what wondrous magic brings  
Such melting strains from those mute strings!

But Nature had no gift denied,  
Or grace, where countless others vied,

For when she sang, methought such notes  
Could only come from angel throats,  
Since nought but those could ever bear  
The sweetness of the ones heard there.

First came the warble of a bird;  
Then but a human voice was heard;  
Then some still more impassioned strain  
Infused my pulse, and thrilled my brain —  
As o'er the strand the billows roll,  
These lapped and laved my raptured soul.

But vain indeed it were to ask  
Of artist hand — unequal task —  
To counterfeit the grace divine  
Embodied there in every line,  
For e'en had Raphael sought to trace  
The beauty of that form and face,  
The vision would have dazed his brain,  
And moveless must his hand have lain!

## THE SLUGGARD

---

God help the man, in all whose days,  
No worthy deed is found to praise;  
Who has in life no aim or end  
Beyond the pleasures it may lend;  
Who never soiled his palms by work,  
And never will, if he can shirk;  
Who with no useful calling learned  
Has never yet a dollar earned;  
Who shifts and shirks whate'er he can,  
Imposing on his fellowman  
The burdens they alike should bear,  
And have for him no thought or care —  
Who wears the latest cut in clothes  
And for each stitch, his tailor owes;  
Who asks you for "just one more loan,"

Yet to repay one, ne'er was known;  
Who deems life a consummate bore,  
And each day worse than that before,  
Yet, like a spendthrift, seeks to borrow  
For use to-day, hours of the morrow;  
Who every font of pleasure dries,  
And no voluptuous sense denies —  
A drifting hulk on life's high sea,  
Attain'd with moral leprosy —  
God help, I say, this worthless man;  
No other will; He only can!

## UNDAUNTED

---

Day, lingering in the darkening West  
Lifts high the taper in his hand,  
Whose purple rays benignly rest,  
Where hurrying Night shall straightway  
stand.

Throughout the heaven's vaulted height  
Hang twilight lamps, now burning low,  
Which, as they spy the goddess, Night,  
Salute her with their brightest glow.

She, stealing from her curtained bowers,  
Where resting she hath hidden lain,  
Resumes her vigil through the hours  
To guard, in turn, Day's vast domain.

Together, they, like sentinels,  
Patrolled the centuries that were,  
Which, huddled in their mouldy cells  
Now rest in Time's vast sepulchre.

Since parting at primeval dawn  
When last he saw her beauteous face,  
Day hath pursued this nimble fawn  
With longing heart, and eager pace.

Unwearied by his futile chase;  
Undaunted, too, by cruel fate,  
But yearning for one fond embrace,  
Each morn he bursts the Orient gate.

His passion now resistless grown,  
He throws his arms from roseate bowers,  
But timid Night, alert, hath flown;—  
Behold! her tears drip from the flowers.



## ACROSS THE STREET

---

To club-house loiterers who, *en masse*,  
Stare out at maidens as they pass —  
That noonday throng, just out of bed,  
Which turns its eyes, but not its head —  
All prinked and plumed for the parade  
In tailored suits — half “ready made” —  
To prurient loiterers such as these,  
No earthly pageant could so please.

But now and then a clubless man  
May have his day Elysian,  
For as he trudges home at night,  
There may from off the car alight,  
Just at the corner where he dwells,  
Some Aphrodite who excels

The Grecian goddess, both in grace,  
And beauty of her classic face;  
And then — since things have turned his way —  
May learn, perchance, that very day  
That this rare maid lives in the *suite*  
That faces his, across the street.

Yes, once I met a celibate  
(That thing old-maids so deprecate)  
Who vouched the truth, as well of this,  
As other forms of worldly bliss  
To which his fancy strangely clung,  
Until the fateful *dénouement*,  
Which showed well how, when came the test,  
A maiden played the game the best,  
And just *how* well she knew the art,  
He thus proceeded to impart:

“Once from my window, hour by hour,  
I gazed on Nature’s fairest flower;

A creature far more shy than bold,  
With glowing cheeks, and hair of gold,  
Whose eyes returned the sky's own blue,  
Whose lips would shame the poppy's hue,  
Whose form, so luscious, ripe and rare  
'Twould animate the very air  
Through which she moved, with faultless grace,  
To hide, at times, her roguish face. —  
Who smiled in most bewitching ways,  
And each month flirted thirty days  
Most ardently, yet so reserved,  
That had my bread been likewise served  
I should have starved, and no regret,  
While gazing on this rare coquette.

“So while this maid, in that coy way,  
Thus tortured me from day to day,  
I realized how very fine  
Grandmother Prude had drawn the line

That tolerated half her wiles  
But held us *dumb* as two gargoyles.

“But science, ah, that wondrous thing  
May peasant serve, as well as king;  
And since dame Grundy, be it known,  
Had quite o’erlooked the telephone  
(As I had mine, where on the wall  
It long had hung without a “call”)  
This, I employed from day to day,  
(But in no interdicted way)  
To sup the nectar, sip by sip,  
In accents from her honied lip,  
Until my brain took wings and flew  
To realms whereof it never knew,  
Where sweet communion was maintained  
And more than former joys attained,  
'Till, Icarus-like, the heated wires  
Got melted by our amorous fires,  
And when one day, quite unawares,

I dropped to earth to make repairs,  
My charmer, with her back-hair down,  
And in plain view of half the town,  
Serenely stood at her front door,  
There *flirting with my janitor!*"

## CLARK AND THE OREGON

---

The Oregon at anchor lay within the Golden  
Gate,  
And far remote from surging waves — a thing  
inanimate —  
When came an order — urgent, brief — to  
“*Make for Callao,*”  
And there await, for war might be, and with  
no dastard foe.  
“*All hands to anchor!*” shouted Clark; then  
tugged each groaning chain,  
And ere the night that battleship was plough-  
ing through the main.  
And from that grave and anxious hour, for tid-  
ings still to learn,

She rushing, left her foaming wake for nigh a  
league astern.

Along Pacific's coast she sped, as ship ne'er  
sped before,

Led by the Southern Cross whose beam each  
wave in sequence bore.

Callao reached, late orders read, "*At once for  
Rio sail,*" —

Then on she swept like mountain mist before  
a furious gale,

And through Magellan's hungry jaws — more  
dreaded than armed foes —

Till safe beyond their reefs and rocks, three  
lusty cheers arose.

What, though Cervera's fleet were met? —  
what, though in wait it lay? —

This made him but more daring, and more  
eager for the fray.

What, though the crew keen hunger felt, and  
knew nor sleep nor rest,

If yielding what they needed most, would serve  
their country best?  
The sturdy stokers, nigh outworn, still fiercer  
kept their fires,  
And not a man, though parched with thirst,  
once stopped to quench desires.  
The North Star now, from realms afar, intenser  
made its ray —  
That beacon which the brightest burns when  
lighting Freedom's way;  
And toward its beam, through battering seas,  
the battleship swept on,  
While Clark stood constant on the bridge, and  
watched for lurking Don.  
At length she entered Rio's port, where late  
dispatches bore  
News that the dogs of war were loosed, and  
bayed along our shore,  
When like a meteor she swept on to join our  
fleet that lay



At Santiago's armored gate, where it held Spain  
at bay.

The engineers, unconscious grown by stifling  
air, alack,

Borne to the deck and half restored, tried hard  
to stagger back;

And though this sovereign of the sea, five thou-  
sand leagues had run,

This paragon of battleships, as fresh as when  
begun,

With Clark at helm, and crew elate — this more  
than welcome guest —

Unhalting, pushed to Sampson's line, then  
proved herself his best!

That Sabbath morn had calmly dawned, and  
through the languid air

Came far, faint sounds of convent bells, that  
called to anxious prayer;

But Oh! what crashing thunders break, when  
now the foemen meet!  
For look you there, on swiftly comes Cervera's  
doughty fleet,  
Defiant, and with war-like mien, out through  
the narrow bay!  
All-desperate now, they open fire, and force the  
awful fray,  
But Sampson's roaring guns reply, "*You're  
welcome here, come on!*" —  
When furies of a thousand hells were gathered  
here in one!  
Through smoke and fume the battle waged, and  
every missile sent,  
Was planted where it counted most, and where  
the gunners meant,  
When, leading all, the Oregon dashed swiftly  
to the van,  
And raked and riddled with her shells each  
deck where dared a man,

While Clark forgot his conning-tower where  
danger was the least,

And on his forward turret stood where danger  
never ceased.

The Spaniards read their tragic fate in their  
doomed cruisers' light,

Which all aflame, dashed on the shore, glad to  
give up the fight.

Henceforth, on fame's eternal page, the Oregon  
will shine,

And Clark — that brave "Green-Mountain  
Boy" — will be in every line;

That hill-born hero of the waves, whose name  
revered will be,

So long as valor has a place in annals of the  
sea!

Elsewhere ones rank depends on kings, whose  
whim makes "noble blood,"

But Clark was not that way endowed — *his*  
    knighthood came from God —  
The kind that captured old “Fort Ti.,” and  
    won at Bennington,  
Where grand old Stark the Hessians fought,  
    and drove from every gun.  
And so where Clark shall have command — that  
    leader true and brave —  
From every mast, on every breeze, “Old Glory”  
    still shall wave!

## CHILDHOOD'S DREAM

---

Ah, blessed was that childhood day  
When with sweet Alice, blithe and gay,  
We tripped adown the country lane —  
Her hand in mine — her gallant swain.

O, she was more than Saxon fair  
With sunbeams nestled in her hair,  
While from her tranquil, deep-blue eyes,  
Outshone a gleam of Paradise.

Her lips were like twin rubies set  
With pearls between — I see them yet —  
As when she, blushing bashfully,  
Said: "I love you, if you love me."

I answered in no doubting way,  
Down in the lane that joyful day;  
And our two hearts thence beat as one,  
And few were hours they beat alone.

No threatening cloud or gathering mist  
E'er darkened this our childhood tryst,  
But every sun shone full and fair,  
More than content to linger there.

We loved as only children love  
When mated first in Heaven above,  
Whose gracious smile was on us cast  
And in whose beam our joys were passed.

Life then was one sweet reverie;  
Its rhythm one fond melody;  
That melody one gentle voice  
Whose accents bade my heart rejoice.

But lo! what grief soon pierced my heart  
And sent its pang to every part,  
When illness came, and Alice died,  
And wondering angels turned and sighed.

And since that day, how anxiously  
I've tried to solve that mystery —  
To learn why buds are made to bloom,  
Then, ere their fruitage, reach their doom —

Why childhood, fresh and fair and pure,  
Should be the one for death to lure,  
While age is left to totter through  
Allotted years concealed from view.

Life's noon had passed ere once again  
I wandered through that hallowed lane,  
But lo, how changed! — few signs it bore  
That I had known the place before.

I sought the humble cottage near,  
Which all my childhood was so dear,  
But found it not; where once it stood  
Were tangled weeds, and fire-charred wood.

With saddened heart I turned to go,  
But spied, hard by, a headstone low,  
Whereat I paused, and through my tears,  
Read — “Here lies Alice: aged ten years.”



## WILLIAM McKINLEY

---

True to each trust, and best when trusted most;  
For country first, though facing war or peace;  
Making in peace its greatness greater still,  
While yet in war, his young, intrepid breast,  
On many a blood-soaked, death-strewn battle-  
field

Was bared to shield a Nation's heart from  
harm.

Gentle, strong; courageous, just; he walked  
erect

The paths of righteousness whereon was thrown  
The radiant light of his unsullied soul —  
The emanation of creative Heaven.  
This peerless man, by fate ordained to lead,

And lift mankind to more exalted heights,  
Alas! by Anarch's venom'd fang lies slain!  
And when he fell, a Nation mute with woe  
Stood dazed and awestruck at his bier, and lo,  
Beyond the seas, e'en to remotest lands,  
Unbidden tears and solemn-tolling bells  
Bespoke an anguish deep as was our own.  
That blameless life; that apt, sagacious tongue,  
(Which ne'er was heard save for his country's  
weal)

Though hushed on earth forevermore, yet speak  
As with an angel's trumpet and declare  
That, in the precious lesson he bequeathed,  
The better life is lingering with us still.

September, 1901.

## DESTINY

---

As I strolled past an ancient hall,  
With ivied tower, and vine-clad wall,  
A beauteous rose peered through the maze  
Whereat I paused and fixed my gaze.

Though tremulous, as if through fear,  
It seemed to whisper to come near,  
And bending low to catch each word,  
This was the touching plaint I heard:

“Once I with happy comrades dwelt  
Where ne’er a stranger’s hand was felt —  
In far-off fields where wild-woods twine —  
Companioned with the herds and kine.

“Forever free from toil and care,  
With naught but pleasure for our share,  
We dreamed the tranquil hours away,  
Throughout each languid, summer day.

“Of danger then we had no thought,  
For by no others were we sought  
Than by the birds and honey bees,  
And butterflies, and friends like these.

“But now, how changed! Where'er we bloom  
We're sure to find our early doom;  
No more for us the happy hours  
Once shared in those secluded bowers.

“Here did I have a gentle mate,  
Whose love for me was passing great,  
But ere it had become half grown,  
I was despoiled and left alone;

“For while the thorns that guard each flower  
True to their trust, enforce their power,  
Yet would some ruthless hand each day  
Pluck off and bear our best away —

“Away to where some care-worn face —  
Familiar at the market-place —  
By waiting long, and selling low,  
Prolongs a half-fed life of woe;

“Or where, within the footlight’s glare,  
’Tis nightly hurled in places where  
Some soubrette holds a motley throng  
With flippant jest and ribald song;

“Or where it droops in worse despair  
When tangled in some harlot’s hair,  
And through a long, revolting night,  
Would languish, fade and die affright;

“Or where it decks the trembling bride,  
When kneeling at the altar side —  
Fit symbol of a purer love  
Descended here from realms above;

“Or where some heart-crushed mother weeps  
For her beloved, who lifeless sleeps,  
It fain would have her silent prayer  
Ascend on incense it sheds there.”

Thus spoke that inoffending rose  
Which told its pleasures and its woes.  
But of its mate, what fate befell,  
Or good or ill, what tongue shall tell!

## THE OLD YEAR

---

The Old Year, burdened with his spoil,  
    Stole off, and staggered as he strode,  
For he was wearied by the toil  
    By which he'd gained his ponderous load.  
Yet, never halting in his quest,  
    (As if his victims were too few)  
He forward on his mission pressed  
    As if fresh fields were still in view.  
He bore a desperado's mien  
    As he stalked on exultingly,  
For in his demon eye was seen  
    The marks of sleepless revelry;  
Nay, everywhere his visage told  
    The tale of long debauchery,  
Yet with a lust still uncontrolled,

He hungered for satiety.  
His field had been that one wherein  
All seasons bore but ripened grain;  
Where youth and age, where alien, kin,  
Alike were garnered in his train.  
Unmoved by prayers, or sobs, or tears,  
He sought to make his carnival  
The mightiest far of all the years,  
And count his work the best of all.  
Begone, thou heartless reveler,  
And hence remain forevermore;  
Thy work is one vast sepulchre,  
And thou hast closed and sealed the door!



## GOD'S HOROLOGUE

---

God tells the hoary age of earth  
In strata formed about its girth:  
This horologue, wound by His hand,  
Is such that all may understand.

But in its workings — wondrous, vast —  
Recurring seasons as they passed  
Were as mere seconds in the score,  
And centuries counted scarcely more.

And after eons shall have flown,  
Its age shall even then be known,  
For found beneath this mundane sod,  
Will be that same time-piece of God.

## DISILLUSION

---

O could I once bring back again those happy  
childhood hours,  
Made joyful by a sweet content, amid youth's  
budding flowers,  
Till in my sleep, some roving nymph sought my  
confiding ear,  
And whispered there enchanting tales that  
dazzled me to hear.

Ere then, no restless discontent had plagued  
my tranquil peace,  
Or ventured to molest the spell where joy had  
no surcease;  
For life was at its morning then, and its be-  
nignant light

Encompassed me at noonday, and tinged my  
dreams at night.

But I was promised power and fame, and cof-  
fers piled with gold,  
And palaces as gorgeous as the Doges had of  
old,  
Adorned with treasures, quaint and rare — the  
spoil of every land —  
With retinues and willing slaves, to serve my  
least command.

Nay, that henceforth my life should be like some  
luxurious dream —  
One never known to those who toil, o'er whom  
I was supreme —  
For I to princely rule was born — confided to  
me then —  
Because my veins coursed noble blood, not that  
of common men.

Nay more, that kingdoms I should have — vast  
    empires in domain —  
O'er which, like potentates of old, in glory I  
    should reign,  
And that my courts and pageants should in  
    splendor far outvie  
The proudest pomp of other lands, and dazzle  
    every eye.

But lo! I was not told the cost of all that pomp  
    and power;  
That I'd be robbed of all my peace from that  
    ill-fated hour,  
Or that I nevermore should feel my childhood  
    heart aglow  
With transports which till then I'd known, but  
    all be changed to woe.

No kingdoms yet have come to me, nor palaces,  
    nor gold,

Which on that night were plighted me, though  
now I have grown old.

Yet patiently I've waited through the unre-  
quiting years,

And watched with eager, longing eyes, and often  
through my tears —

Tears for those heart-remembered joys that  
sweet contentment gave

Before ambition bound me, as its helpless, cring-  
ing slave;

For dearer far than kingdoms, or palaces, or  
gold,

Were those lost days of sweet content, — the  
childhood days of old!

## AN EPITHALAMIUM

---

Since Eden's pair, that primal morn,  
First kindled love's consuming flame,  
The millions that have since been born  
Have played, in turn, the same old game.

It matters not that Eden lies  
Amid a far-off hemisphere,  
Since *love* alone makes Paradise,  
Where springtime lingers all the year.

Ring out the merry marriage bell!  
Twine garlands round the bride to-day,  
For none who heard her vows shall tell  
That *this* fair one balked at "*obey*"!

All hail with glad and joyful hymn;  
    Drink health and luck to bride and groom,  
And fill your beakers to the brim,  
    Then every ruddy drop consume!

## MONT BLANC

---

Eternal mount, whose brow serene  
Is pillowed on the clouds, half-seen,  
What longing thy abode inspires  
In human hearts — what vast desires!

'Tis not decreed that mortal clod  
Should dwell on earth, and still with God,  
But thou, reared from an earthly vale,  
Dost in supernal realms regale.

And then, as if thou hadst a soul  
Pervading the celestial goal,  
Thou hast attained the crown which now  
Triumphant rests upon thy brow.



And lo, throughout the silent night,  
The drifting snows pile height on height,  
And thus renewed from day to day,  
It ne'er shall fade, or pass away,

But brightly from those realms divine  
Shall ever and forever shine —  
A beacon, beaming far and wide,  
For weary, wayward feet, a guide.

COLUMBIA  
(AN APPEAL FOR CUBA)

---

O Goddess, turn thy beauteous face  
To that fair Isle where dwells a race  
Whose plaintive voice, upraised to thee,  
Pleads but for righteous liberty!

For since the travail of thy birth,  
Of freedom thou hast known the worth,  
And at its altar vigil kept  
While foes intrenched, and sluggards slept.

The girdle 'neath thy throbbing breast  
Was forged from chains of those oppressed;  
And stripes upon thy stola — these  
Are blood-stains of thy votaries.

The spangled cap that crowns thy head  
Was hallowed by the martyr dead,  
Who braved and bled, who fought and fell,  
That Freedom might survive to tell.

Stretch, then, thy helpful arm to aid  
That hapless race, by fate betrayed,  
And tear away their loathsome chains,  
And tyrants teach that God still reigns!

June, 1898.

## TO MARJORIE

(A DÉBUTANTE)

---

O Marjorie, with brow so fair, and heart so  
chaste and pure,  
The world adoring thee beholds thy fit investiture,  
For thou dost stand in queenly robes — a bride  
to coming years —  
As smiling Future beckons thee, but leaves the  
Past in tears!  
O goddess of the present, thou! O vision of  
the morrow,  
Thy younger comrades bid adieu, with pensive  
heart and sorrow.

May every fond, enchanting dream of child-  
hood's golden hour  
Bring forth its glad reality, and every bud its  
flower.  
But as life's pathway thou shalt tread, and up  
its steeps shalt climb,  
Choose for thy comrades Charity, and Hope  
and Faith sublime;  
Then thou hast taught humanity how justly  
thou hast earned  
The heavenly radiance from above, that on thy  
head is turned.

## THE ALCHEMIST

---

That peerless Alchemist — the heart —  
Transcending the magician's art,  
Imbues each tear, by passion wrought,  
With distillations of our thought.

Hence one emotion-laden tear  
Knows more than wisest sage or seer,  
Or oceans vast, that ebb and flow,  
Of human joy and human woe.

7

## THE FINAL VOYAGE

---

The night was starless, bleak and drear,  
And through the rigging one could hear  
Discordant and unceasing moans,  
Like those of some dread monster's groans,  
As rolled the ship from side to side  
Through sea and storm she still defied.

And bravely battling, day by day,  
What first was fear, became dismay,  
When braver hearts the faint would cheer  
Could they suppress their own sad tear,  
Lest kindred on the distant shore  
Might wait, alas, forevermore.

Beneath the cabin's creaking beam,  
In calm repose and joyful dream,  
An aged mother, lone and ill,  
Throughout the tempest slumbered still,  
Whose lamp of life, with fading ray,  
Foretold her near and final day.

Long widowed, she had lived to toil  
On Scotia's unrequiting soil,  
For, one by one, at man's estate,  
Their pulses strong, their hearts elate,  
Her boys had sought Columbia's shores  
Where Plenty smiled from open doors.

And thus, with all life's sunshine lost,  
Time touched her with its wilting frost;  
Then years grew long, as shadows stray  
And lengthen with departing day,  
And fondest of her dreams were fain  
To greet her precious boys again.



Though tossed by that relentless sea,  
She slumbered on in ecstasy —  
Still dreaming of her darling boys  
And future years of waiting joys,  
But ere the long-lost sun arose,  
Her soul had fled all earthly woes.

With morning light, in steerage lay —  
Its spirit fled — the mortal clay,  
And soon the sailors' heavy tread  
Bore to the deck the humble dead;  
Its shroud — an outworn, offcast sail —  
It mattered not what might avail.

And then, submissive to command,  
Those brawny sailors, strong of hand,  
Committed to the famished wave  
That which its hunger seemed to crave,  
And lost was that in its embrace,  
Whose sepulchre no kin can trace.

For her no tolling bell was heard,  
Nor yet by friend a spoken word;  
But elsewhere will be tolled a knell  
In hearts that still remember well  
Their slumbers and their blissful rest  
Upon that mother's loving breast.

No pealing anthem there was sung,  
Nor praiseful chant of human tongue;  
But heard instead will ever be  
The murmur of the murmuring sea,  
Whose billows will forever roll  
A requiem for her peace of soul.







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